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ABSTRACT

A practicum addressed the problem of achieving reading speed and accuracy along with reading comprehension in an eighth grade remedial class, by implementing short timed reading passages and teacher-made speed tapes. Eleven students were pretested and posttested with the Gates-MacGinitie reading test in comprehension, speed, and accuracy. The 10-week implementation was successful in meeting most of its objectives. Results revealed that 91% of the students met the required gain of .04 year in reading comprehension. The actual mean gain was one year. Results demonstrated that a remedial target group could gain in reading comprehension and reading rate in a 10-week period. Research also demonstrated that remedial reading students increase their reading comprehension at a much greater rate than their reading speed and accuracy. (Appendixes include individual student scores, sample student charts, reading rate formula, survey results, and a sample of the type of materials used by the students.) (Author/MG)

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READING RATE AND COMPREHENSION:

A SOLUTION STRATEGY

by

MARSHA ANHOLD JACOBSON

A Practicum Report
submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education at Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in the School Practices Information Files for reference.

December/1988

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Martha Arbold Judson

Abstract

Reading Rate and Comprehension: A Solution Strategy

Jacobson, Marsha A., 1988: Practicum Report, Nova University, The Center for Advancement of Education. Descriptors: Reading Rate/Reading Comprehension/ /Reading Speed and Accuracy/Reading Achievement in the Middle School/

The problem of achieving reading speed and accuracy along with reading comprehension in an eighth grade remedial class was addressed by the implementation of short timed reading passages and teacher made speed tapes. The students were pretested and posttested with the Gates-MacGinitie reading test in comprehension and speed and accuracy. The ten week implementation was successful in meeting most of its objectives. The results of the research demonstrated that a remedial target group could gain in reading comprehension and reading rate in a ten week period. The research also demonstrated that remedial reading students increase their reading com[prehension at a much greater rate than their reading speed and accuracy. Appendices include individual student scores, sample student charts, reading rate formula, survey results, and sample of the type of materials used by the students.

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Student's Name Marsha Anhold Jacobson

Program Site NAUTILUS Middle School Date June 13, 1988

Observer's Name Elsie O'Dell Elsie P. O'Dell
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Observer's position Assistant Principa Phone # 532-3481

Observer's comment on impact of the project (handwritten):

It worked!! Great project, lots of enthusiasm and testing all tremendous results!

v

Chapter I

Purpose

Purpose

The site for the writer's practicum was a junior high school in a large metropolitan area in South Florida. The writer used a target population of students from a low socio-economic background. The students were bussed to the school site which was located in an affluent community. The enrollment of the junior high school was approximately 1300 students. The ethnic breakdown of the school was 55 percent Hispanic, 25 percent white, and 20 percent black.

The administrative staff at the school site consisted of a principal, two assistant principals, and two deans. The instructional staff was comprised of 54 teachers. The student service support personnel included a school psychologist, a placement specialist, a speech pathologist, an occupational specialist, a visiting teacher, and two counselors. Forty-seven percent of the staff had bachelor's

degrees, 39 percent had master's degrees, three percent are educational specialists, and one member of the staff had a doctorate in education.

The writer was reading department chairman at the school site. The reading department had seven instructors. The reading department serviced all students who had received the stanine ranking of four or below on the comprehension section of the Stanford Achievement Test. The students who had received a stanine of three or four were placed into one of the 17 corrective reading classes offered at the school site . The average size of a corrective reading class was 32 pupils. The students who had received a stanine of one or two in reading comprehension were placed into one of the 13 remedial reading classes. The average class size for remedial reading at the school site was 16 pupils. The remedial reading classes were partially funded by state monies and therefore were reduced in size by one-half. The target population for this practicum project was comprised of four girls and seven boys. The total number of students in the target population was eleven.

The writer taught five eighth grade remedial reading classes each day. Each class session was 50

minutes in length. The classes met five times a week. The target population of this study was one of the five remedial reading classes.

The writer identified two major factors that were impacting the reading ability of the eighth grade remedial reading students. The two factors were reading comprehension and reading rate. The conclusions of the writer were based on 15 years of experience in the teaching of reading, pupil observation, formal test scores, and a departmental survey of factors impacting reading achievement at the school site.

The May 1987 Stanford Achievement test results indicated that the eighth grade remedial students were reading from four to six years below grade level. The scores from the Stanford Achievement test had reinforced the writer's observation of a comprehension problem with the remedial reading students. The writer conducted a survey of the reading department at the school site (Appendix A:41). The survey was conducted during a one hour reading staff meeting in which the eight problem areas listed on the survey were discussed by the staff members. The writer also asked if any additional problem areas should be included on the survey form. The department members indicated that

there should be no additions to the survey. The department ranked reading comprehension as the number one factor impacting reading achievement and test scores (Appendix B:42). The writer then tested the students with the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test in comprehension. The results of this test verified the fact that the target population was reading on a second through seventh grade level even though the current grade placement was eighth (Appendix C:43).

The survey of the reading department conducted by the writer ranked reading rate and reading accuracy as two of the second highest factors impacting reading achievement and test scores. The writer had observed for many years the slow pace at which the remedial reading students worked on daily assignments and on timed tests. The writer verified the observations in reading speed by administering the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test. The students scored from four to six years below grade level in both speed (Appendix D:44) and accuracy (Appendix E:45). The department members also indicated that vocabulary and knowledge of affixes were also areas which impacted reading. These two areas were encompassed in the broader area of reading comprehension for the purpose of this practicum.

Bussing and personal problems were ranked seventh and eighth on the problem survey and although the department members believed that there was some impact, it was not as severe as the other problem areas listed on the survey.

This practicum project sought to solve the problem of eighth grade remedial reading students scoring from two to six years below grade level in reading comprehension and reading rate.

The writer addressed the problems of reading comprehension and reading rate by seeking to accomplish the following objectives:

1. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .04 year on the Comprehension section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

2. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .04 year in reading speed on the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

3. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .04 year in reading accuracy on the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

4. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the target group participating in the remedial reading program will demonstrate a gain of 50 percent in their reading rate (words per minute) using a reading rate formula (Appendix C:47).

The writer proposed that as a result of the accomplishment of the preceding objectives, affective outcomes such as a more positive attitude toward reading and test taking might also occur. The writer did not measure the affective outcomes with a formal instrument; however, any attitudinal changes informally observed by the writer were mentioned as possible by-products of this study in Chapter Three.

Chapter II

Research and Solution Strategy

The writer conducted a fairly extensive review of the literature in the areas of reading comprehension and the related problem of reading rate. After examining the more recent studies in reading comprehension and reading rate conducted between 1978 and 1988, the writer also researched the available literature from 1968 to 1977. Nine of the studies examined within these two time periods presented problems similar in nature to that of the writer's target group. The studies were then evaluated in regard to their potential as possible solutions to the practicum project.

Labmeir and Vockell (1971) conducted a study of 94 ninth grade students. The research problem was reading speed. The solution involved the use of a 30 lesson programmed-learning television course. The program was successful. There were significant improvements in both speed and comprehension. The target group of the study was similar in nature to

that of the writer's target population; however, the writer's school site did not have the monies to purchase the necessary equipment and materials to implement Labmeir and Vockell's research.

Moodie (1971) conducted a research project which compared reading achievement of students from open plan and traditional elementary classes in three areas; speed and accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension. The target group for this study was evaluated in the seventh grade and again in the eighth grade for these three items. Although this research project covered the same basic areas as the writer's, the writer did not have the open classes available to conduct a comparison study of the two types of classes and their impact on reading acheivement.

Gibson (1971) formulated a reading guide to aid reading speed and comprehension. The guide presented objectives and simple implementation methods to improve the student's skills in content area reading. The objectives presented were those that might be included in a daily lesson plan. Gibson did not cite any research to verify the reliability of the solution strategies that were offered. Due to the lack of documented evidence that the author's strategies positively impacted the problems of reading

comprehension and reading rate, the writer chose not to implement the Gibson solutions for this practicum project.

Clark (1974) conducted a study of 351 students in two Minneapolis secondary schools. The project was designed to increase reading comprehension at the rate of at least one grade equivalent month for each month on roll. This project included self-teaching machines, trailer-classrooms, and a certified reading teacher and paraprofessional for each trailer. Although this project was successful, the writer did not have the resources to implement the project.

Berg (1977) conducted a study with high school juniors and seniors using compressed speech tapes to improve reading speed and comprehension. The study was conducted four days a week, one hour a day for two weeks. The following steps were included in the large group work portion of Berg's study:

1. A structured pattern was presented to the students. Before beginning the exercise, an explanation was given to the pupils regarding what to look for while reading (e.g., fact and opinion, detail, main idea, etc.).
2. The speeded tape was played while the students read silently along.

3. The tape was played a second time. The structural elements were then discussed with the students.
4. Finally, the class was timed on the passage as they read silently. The students were urged to read faster than the compressed tape.

The study yielded impressive results. The students made an average gain of 80 percent in reading rate and 14 percent in reading comprehension. With certain modifications, the preceding study was feasible as a partial solution to the writer's practicum problem. The writer's school site did not have the monies to fund the purchase of a speech compressor. Therefore implementation of the strategy would have to be done without the equipment used by Berg.

Larson (1979) conducted a study on "how a reading course taught twice a week for ten weeks to ninth and tenth graders would affect performance on these factors as measured on standardized test scores" (pg.142). The study used an experimental group and a control group. Larson lectured to the experimental group about eye fixations, regressions, skimming, scanning, and reading flexibility. The group practiced the paperback pacing method twice a week with periodic comprehension tests to check the group's progress. The

other three days remained exactly the same for both groups. The experimental group made significant gains in both reading speed and comprehension. Larson's study used paperbacks in fiction and nonfiction as the primary materials used to implement the solution to the problem. The writer's school site had limited paperbacks. Therefore, the paperback pacing method was not a practical alternative.

Laughter (1980) implemented a districtwide reading project which emphasized staff development for middle school teachers. A study of reading growth rate was conducted over a three year period. The objective of the project was to see if the students could exceed their prior reading growth rates. The students were pretested and the given individual prescriptions to increase their reading rate and reading comprehension. Specialized inservice training was provided for the teachers. The project was successful. Due to the time and resource constraints of this practicum project, the writer was not able to implement a plan of such immense scope.

Zemmels (1982) initiated a program for all incoming seventh graders to help improve low reading scores. The program was based on a teacher rotation

plan where student groups would rotate from teacher to teacher in six week blocks. The teachers used their own materials for this project. As the students improved, they were promoted into higher groups. The students were able to benefit from different teaching strategies and materials. The program was very successful. The students, who were reading at an average of two years below grade level, raised their reading levels an average of four years during the three year program. This project had obvious merit. It provided for staff involvement and use of materials well suited to each teacher. This project would have been very inexpensive to implement. However, due to the time involved, this project would not have been practical for the writer.

Otto (1985) advocated repetitive reading as a means of increasing reading fluency, rate, and comprehension. The paper concluded, however, that there were no clear results in the repeated reading studies that Otto had investigated. The opinions held by Otto in regard to the importance of repeated reading, as it related to reading speed and comprehension, were taken into consideration by the writer when developing the solution to the practicum problem.

The writer was working under two major constraints: time and money. After reviewing the literature, the writer felt satisfied that a research project could be developed to increase reading comprehension and reading speed and accuracy which would not involve added expense or a lengthy implementation time. It was feasible that the students for this project could demonstrate a reading gain with teacher-made materials and materials already found in the classroom. The writer would be working within a time frame of approximately ten weeks, but felt confident that the project could be undertaken due to the fact that other studies were able to successfully demonstrate a gain within a similar time period.

It was the writer's opinion, that Berg (1977) offered the most effective solution to the practicum problem. The study could be implemented with a few additions and modifications. The writer presented a modified version of the Berg study as part of the practicum solution strategy.

Chapter III

Methodology

Methodology

The writer used a target group of 11 eighth grade students ranging in reading ability from second to seventh grade. This practicum project sought to solve the problem of eighth grade remedial reading students scoring from one to six years below grade level in reading comprehension and reading rate.

The writer addressed the problems of reading comprehension and reading rate by seeking to accomplish the following objectives:

1. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .04 year on the Comprehension section of the Gates-Macginitie Reading Test.

2. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group

participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .Ø4 year in reading speed on the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

3. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 8Ø percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .Ø4 year in reading accuracy on the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

4. After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 8Ø percent of the target group participating in the remedial reading program will demonstrate a gain of 5Ø percent in their reading rate (words per minute) using a reading rate formula (Appendix C:43).

After a careful review of the literature, the writer developed a two part solution strategy to address the target group's problem of reading rate and reading comprehension. In the development of this plan, it was necessary for the writer to combine strategies for the improvement of reading comprehension and reading speed. The following two activities were utilized for speed by means of

different timing plans and for comprehension by written and oral responses to the paragraphs read.

Activity One: The students were given five minutes to read a passage and answer six questions about detail, inference, main idea, and vocabulary questions. Afterwards, the correct answers were read aloud to the class. The students graded their own work. Periodically, the time given for the students to complete the passages was reduced in ten second decrements.

Activity Two: The Berg study (1977) was modified to meet the needs of the writer's target group and the budget restrictions of the school site.

1. A structured pattern was presented to the students. Before beginning the exercise, the writer gave the pupils a brief explanation regarding what to look for while reading (e.g., fact and opinion, detail, main idea).
2. A teacher-made cassette recording of a reading passage was played while the students read silently along.
3. The cassette recording of the passage was played a second time. The writer read comprehension questions to the students. The students responded orally to the questions.

4. Finally, the class was timed on the passage as they read silently. The students were urged to read faster than the cassette recording.

The students kept a chart for each activity. The charts indicated the student progress in the areas of reading comprehension (Appendix H:48-49) and reading rate (Appendix I:50).

Resources

The site of the practicum implementation was the writer's classroom. The proposed strategies were conducted during the first 15 minutes of each class period. The materials selected for the activities were on a third and fourth grade level. The writer chose material between the target group's independent and instructional reading levels. The passages used for Activity One were taken from Essential Skills Book One by Walter Pauk (Appendix J:51). The passages for Activity Two were taken from Fantastic Facts by Jeri Schapiro (Appendix K:52). The average length of the passages used in Activity Two was approximately 400 words. The passages were recorded at an average rate of 211 words per minute. A regular cassette recorder was used to make the tapes.

Monitoring

Pretest Week (March 14-March 18):

All pretests were administered during the pretest week.

Monday: Gates MacGinitie Speed and Accuracy Test form D1M

Tuesday: Reading Rate Formula will be applied to a 300 word paragraph (Appendix)

Wednesday: Gates MacGinitie Comprehension Test form D1M

Thursday: 1. Makeup tests for absent students
2. Introduction to the students of what was to be expected in the next ten weeks
3. Charts of weekly progress were distributed and explained.

Week One (March 21-March 25):

Equipment: Cassette tape recorder

Monday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: five minutes

Tuesday: Activity Two (cassette tape and oral questions)

Wednesday: Chart Day. The students and the writer recorded the results of Monday-Tuesday on two separate ten-week charts.

Thursday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: four minutes and 50 seconds

Friday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: four minutes and 40 seconds

Observation: Activity One. All of the students finished reading the passage. The majority of the students completed the six passage questions.

Observation: Activity Two. The students were able to read along at the pace set by the cassette tape with no observable difficulty.

Week Two (March 28-March 31):

Equipment: Cassette tape recorder

Monday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: four minutes and 30 seconds

Tuesday: Activity Two (cassette tape and oral questions)

Wednesday: Chart Day. The students and the writer recorded the results of Thursday-Tuesday on the two ten-week activity charts.

Thursday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: four minutes and 20 seconds

Friday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: four minutes and ten seconds

Observation: Activity One. All of the students finished reading the passage. The majority of the students completed the six passage questions.

Observation: Activity Two. The students were able to read along at the pace set by the cassette tape with no observable difficulty.

Week Three (April 11-April 15):

Equipment: Cassette tape recorder

Monday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: four minutes

Tuesday: Activity Two (cassette tape and oral questions).

Wednesday: Chart Day. The students and the writer recorded the results of Thursday-Tuesday on the two ten-week activity charts.

Thursday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes and 50 seconds

Friday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes and 40 seconds

Observation: Activity One. All of the students finished reading the passage. The majority of the students completed the six passage questions.

Observation: Activity Two. The students were able to read along at the pace set by the cassette tape with no observable difficulty.

Week Four (April 18-April 22)

Equipment: Cassette tape recorder

Monday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes and 30 seconds

Tuesday: Activity Two (cassette tape and oral questions)

Wednesday: Chart Day. The students and the writer recorded the results of Thursday-Tuesday on the two ten-week activity charts.

Thursday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes and 20 seconds

Friday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes and ten seconds.

Observation: Activity One. All of the students finished reading the passage. The majority of the students completed the six passage questions.

Observation: Activity Two. The students were able to read along at the pace set by the cassette tape with no observable difficulty.

Week Five (April 25-April 29):

Mid-course evaluations were made during week five. The writer reviewed and evaluated the silent reading paragraph questions for Activity One from weeks one through four to check the reading comprehension of the target group. The students were responding to the timed passages with no observable frustration. No increases or decreases were made in the time limits or the reading level of the material. The writer did make one adjustment in the schedule. Chart Day, which was originally on Wednesday of each week was changed to Friday for weeks five through ten. The writer observed a need to record the results of the student's work at the end of each week to give the

monitoring additional continuity. In this manner, the writer was able to better review student progress.

Monday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes

Tuesday: Activity Two (Cassette tape and oral questions)

Wednesday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes

Thursday: Activity One (silent paragraph and questions) Time limit: three minutes

Friday: Chart Day. The students and the writer recorded the results of Thursday (April 21)- Thursday (April 29) on the two ten-week activity charts.

Activity One was kept at a constant three minutes for the remainder of the silent reading paragraphs. All of the students continued to finish reading the passages within the time limit. Also, the majority of the students continued to answer all of the passage questions within the alotted time. The students displayed increasing confidence in their ability to read and complete the passage questions as the weeks went by. The students appeared to be eager

to do the activity and complete the work with accuracy. Activity Two continued to go well during the final five weeks. In the writer's opinion, the students enjoyed reading along with the cassettes and the activity took on a game-like air. The students particularly enjoyed the third part of Activity Two which required them to try to beat the reading rate set by the tape. There were no observable difficulties with this excercise. For the remaining five weeks, Friday was utilized for recording the results obtained from the work done each Monday through Thursday. Weeks six through nine followed the same schedule of activities as the revised schedule for week five. The dates for weeks six through nine were as follows:

Week Six: May 2 - May 6

Week Seven: May 9 - May 13

Week Eight: May 16 - May 20

Week Nine: May 23 - May 27

Week Ten: May 31- June 3

Week Eleven (June 6-June 10):

Evaluation week-all posttests were administered during week eleven.

Monday: Gates-MacGinitie Speed and Accuracy Test form D1M

Tuesday: Reading Rate Formula was applied to a 300 word paragraph

Wednesday: Gates-MacGinite Reading Comprehension Test form D1M

Thursday: Charting of student progress was completed

Evaluation

Objectives one and two were not only met, but far surpassed the writer's expectation of this practicum project. Objectives three and four were not completely met, but the students did demonstrate a gain. The largest gain was made in the area of comprehension. The reading rate was also increased, but due to the low reading level of the target group, the gain in reading speed was not as dramatic as the group's comprehension gain. There were two signigicant affective by-products of the practicum activities. The first was an eagerness to complete other classroom assignments. This was not observed by the writer prior to the practicum implementation. The second was self confidence in test-taking situations not displayed at the beginning of the implementation. The results of the implementation were, in the writer's opinion, successful.

Chapter IV

Results

Results

The writer used a group pretest-posttest design for objectives one, two, and three of the practicum evaluation . The Survey D form of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test was administered. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test was selected by the writer because of its good reliability and validity. The writer selected the D form of the test for two reasons. The first reason was that the test indicated reading levels through the eleventh grade. The second reason is that the E form of the test began at a frustration level for many of the students in the target group and would not, in the writer's opinion, yield accurate results. The writer examined the several pretest-posttest areas during the evaluation of the Gates-MacGinitie findings.

The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (Comprehension section):

Test Scores: Test results were stated in terms of

year and month rounded off to the nearest tenth (e.g., 3.85 would be rounded off to 3.9 which is equivalent to the third grade ninth month).

Week One

Pretest: Form D1M of the test was administered. The individual scores, mean score, and median score of the target group were recorded.

Results: Reading Comprehension

Individual Scores: (Appendix C:43)

Mean Score: 4.2

Median Score: 3.9

Week Eleven

Posttest: Form D1M of the test was administered. The individual scores, mean score, median score, were recorded.

Results: Reading Comprehension

Individual Scores: (Appendix C:43)

Mean Score: 5.0

Median Score: 5.3

Results of Specified Outcome Objective One

Objective: After ten weeks of specialized

instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .04 year on the Comprehension section of the Gates-Macginitie Reading Test.

Results: Reading Comprehension

Mean Gain: 1.0

Median Gain: 1.0

Pecentage of Students Gaining .04 Year Or More: 91%

Summary: The results exceeded the stated outcome objective. The target group was to have gained .04 year in reading comprehension. The actual mean gain was one year. The actual mean gain exceeded the projected objective gain by eight months. The original outcome objective required 80 percent of the students in the target group to meet the required gain. The actual percentage of students making the required gain was 91 percent. The number of students making the required gain

exceeded the projected percentage by 11 percent. Only one student showed a loss in comprehension from the pretest to the posttest. The student was absent from the writer's classroom for 21 days during the implementation period of this practicum.

The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (Speed and Accuracy section):

Test Scores: Test results were stated in terms of year and month rounded off to the nearest tenth (e.g., 3.85 would be rounded off to 3.9 which is equivalent to the third grade ninth month).

Week One

Pretest: Form D1M of the test was administered. Two sets of scores resulted. One score was for reading speed. The other score was for reading accuracy (amount of error free reading). The results were recorded and examined separately. The individual scores, mean score, and median score of the target were recorded.

Results: Reading Speed

Individual Scores: (Appendix D:44)

Mean Score: 3.5

Median Score: 3.8

Reading Accuracy

Individual Scores: (Appendix E:45)

Mean Score: 3.6

Median Score: 3.5

Week Eleven

Posttest: Form D1M of the test was administered. The individual scores, mean score, and median score were recorded.

Results: Reading Speed

Individual Scores: (Appendix D:44)

Mean Score: 4.8

Median Score: 4.9

Reading Accuracy

Individual Scores: (Appendix E:45)

Mean Score: 4.4

Median Score: 4.8

Results of Specified Outcome Objective Two

Objective: After Ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the

students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .Ø4 year in reading speed on the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

Results: Reading Speed

Mean Gain: 1.2

Median Gain: 1.4

Percentage of Students Gaining .Ø4 Year or More: 82%

Summary: The results exceeded the stated outcome objective. The target group was to have gained .Ø4 year in reading speed. The actual mean gain was one year and two months. The actual mean gain exceeded the projected objective gain by ten months. The original outcome objective required 8Ø percent of the students in the target group to meet the required gain. The actual percentage of students making the required gain was 82 percent. The number of students making the

required gain exceeded the projected percentage by two percent. Only one student showed a loss in reading speed from the pretest to the posttest.

Results of Specified Outcome Objective Three

Objective: After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the students in the target group participating in the remedial reading program will gain an average of .04 year in reading accuracy on the Speed and Accuracy section of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

Results: Reading Accuracy

Mean Gain: .8

Median Gain: .6

Percentage of Students Gaining .04 Year or More: 64%

Summary: The criteria for the third objective were partially met. The target group was to have gained .04 year in reading accuracy. The actual mean gain was .08 year. The actual mean gain exceeded the projected

objective gain by four months. The original outcome objective required 80 percent of the target group to meet the required gain. The actual percentage of students making the required gain was 64 percent. This was 16 percent less than the projected objective outcome. No students showed a loss in reading accuracy from the pretest to the postest.

Reading Rate Formula:

The writer administered a 300 word passage to the target group. The reading rate formula (Appendix C) was applied to the passage read. The evaluation design for objective four was group criterion mastery.

Test Scores: The reading rate results were stated in words per minute (WPM) rounded off to the nearest whole number (e.g., 110.27 WPM would be rounded off to 110 WPM).

Week One

Pretest: The students were given a 300 word passage to be read silently. The reading rate formula was applied to the

passage read. The individual scores, mean score, and median score of the target group were recorded.

Results: Reading Rate (Words Per Minute)

Individual Scores: (Appendix F:46)

Mean Score: 110 WPM

Median Score: 113 WPM

Week Eleven

Posttest: The students were given a second 300 word passage to be read silently. The reading rate formula was applied to the passage read. The individual scores, mean score, and median score of the target group were recorded.

Results: Reading Rate (Words Per Minute)

Individual Scores: (Appendix F:46)

Mean Score: 173

Median Score: 166 WPM

Results of Specified Outcome Objective Four

Objective: After ten weeks of specialized instruction, 80 percent of the target group participating in the remedial reading program would demonstrate a gain of 50 percent in their reading rate

(words per minute) using a reading rate formula.

Results: Reading Rate (Words Per Minute)

Mean Gain: 63 WPM

Mean Percntage Gain: 63%

Median Gain: 51 WPM

Median Percentage Gain: 57%

Percentage of Students Gaining 50 Percent or More: 55%

Summary: The criteria for objective four were partially met. The target group was to have demonstrated a gain of 50 percent in reading rate. The actual mean gain was 63 percent. The actual mean gain exceeded the projected objective gain by 13 percent. The original outcome objective required 80 percent of the students in the target group to meet the required gain. The actual percentage of students making the required gain was 55 percent. This was 25 percent less than the projected objective outcome. All of the students in the target group demonstrated a gain in their reading rate.

Evaluation

In the writer's opinion, the practicum project was successful. All of the objectives were totally or partially met. The results of the first two objectives exceeded the original projections. The gains made by the target group in reading comprehension far exceeded their gains in reading speed and accuracy. Although there were gains made in reading speed, it is the opinion of the writer that the gains were minimal due to the reading difficulties of the target group. The writer concluded that remedial reading students should be given practice and encouragement in increasing their reading speed, but that the teacher must keep in mind that the first gains will come in reading comprehension, and only after sufficient mastery in this area will significant gains in reading speed be realized.

Chapter V

Recommendations

It is the opinion of the writer that this practicum project will be of lasting value to teachers at the present school site and also to other school sites in the future. The writer has planned to incorporate the activities into the reading and language arts department lessons for the next school year.

The success of the practicum project was due in part to the realistic objectives for the target group. The students were expected to gain at a normal reading growth rate. Which, due to the remedial status of the target group, was surprisingly high. The resources for the practicum project were easily made or obtained which also contributed to the overall success of the project.

There were three reasons that, in the writer's opinion, this practicum project could be applied to

other reading and language arts programs. First, the activities were only 15 minutes a day, therefore adequate time was left in each class period for other lessons. Second, many different materials could be substituted for the ones used by the writer. Third, the orientation for co-workers would be minimal. Training would last no longer than one 60 minute session.

The writer has presented the practicum findings to the reading department and the language arts department at the practicum school site. Since the practicum was successful in increasing reading comprehension and reading rate, both departments plan on implementing the activities in their test-taking strategies for the Stanford Achievement Test. Copies of the activities have been distributed to the departments with corresponding worksheets and cassette tapes.

The writer also plans to present a copy of this practicum to the school district's area reading office. It is the wish of the writer that the activities and results be shared with other schools in the district.

It is the writer's hope that the problems of reading rate and reading comprehension will continue to be addressed in practicum studies to assist in finding the solution to this very serious problem.

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Appendix A

Problem Survey

(Sample)

Directions: Rate the following on a 1-5 scale. One (1) represents a low impact on reading achievement and test performance, five (5) represents a high impact on reading achievement and test performance. The survey pertains to THIS SCHOOL SITE. You are NOT rating reading problems in general!

1. Reading Comprehension 1 2 3 4 5
2. Rate of Reading.....1 2 3 4 5
3. Vocabulary.....1 2 3 4 5
4. Reading Accuracy.....1 2 3 4 5
5. Knowledge of Affixes.....1 2 3 4 5
6. Socio/Economic Factors...1 2 3 4 5
7. Bussing.....1 2 3 4 5
8. Personal Problems.....1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B

Problem Survey Results

The writer conducted a survey with the Appendix A instrument. The reading department at the school site was asked to respond to the survey. The department was composed of seven instructors.

Reading Problems Ranked in Order of Importance

1. Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary
2. Rate of Reading and Reading Accuracy
3. Socio/Economic Factors
4. Knowledge of Affixes
5. Bussing
6. Personal Problems

Appendix C

Individual Pretest and Posttest Scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test: Comprehension

Student #	Pretest (3/88)	Posttest (6/88)	Gain
1	4.7	5.8	1.1
2	3.7	4.2	.5
3	5.3	7.6	2.3
4	6.5	8.1	1.6
5	3.8	4.8	1.0
6	4.7	5.6	.9
7	3.9	5.3	1.4
8	7.2	6.2	-1.0
9	2.2	3.1	.9
10	3.4	5.0	1.6
11	3.2	4.1	.9

Appendix D

Individual Pretest and Posttest Scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test: Reading Speed

Student #	Pretest (3/88)	Posttest (6/88)	Gain
1	4.0	5.8	1.8
2	2.6	4.0	1.4
3	4.6	4.9	.3
4	4.6	5.1	.5
5	3.8	5.8	2.0
6	2.6	4.9	2.3
7	4.0	5.8	1.8
8	4.9	5.8	.9
9	2.1	2.1	0.0
10	2.6	4.3	1.7
11	2.9	3.8	.9

Appendix E

Individual Pretest and Posttest Scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test: Reading Accuracy

Student #	Pretest (3/88)	Posttest (6/88)	Gain
1	3.5	5.5	2.0
2	2.9	2.9	0.0
3	4.5	5.1	.6
4	4.5	4.8	.3
5	4.1	4.8	.7
6	2.9	5.1	2.2
7	3.8	5.1	1.3
8	5.1	5.4	.4
9	2.3	2.1	-.2
10	2.7	2.9	.2
11	3.2	4.1	.9

Appendix F

Individual Pretest and Posttest Scores
on the Rate of Reading Stated in
Words Per Minute (WPM)

Student #	Pretest (3/88)	Posttest (6/88)	Gain
1	100	114	14 (14%)
2	72	96	24 (33%)
3	113	203	90 (80%)
4	120	141	21 (18%)
5	180	366	186 (103%)
6	138	166	28 (20%)
7	129	203	74 (57%)
8	138	166	28 (20%)
9	32	83	51 (159%)
10	78	166	88 (112%)
11	113	203	90 (80%)

Appendix G

Reading Rate Formula

A 300 word passage is given to the pupils. They are told to begin reading. The instructor times the activity, recording the number of seconds on the board in ten second increments.(e.g., 1=10 seconds, 2=20 seconds, 3=30 seconds, etc.) The pupils are instructed to look at the board when they finish reading and record the last number written by the instructor. When everyone has finished reading, proceed with the following four steps:

STEP ONE: Record the number from the board.

STEP TWO: Multiply the number on the board by 10. This will give you the number of words read per second.

STEP THREE: Divide the number of words in the passage by the number of words read per second.

STEP FOUR: Multiply the answer in Step Three by 60.

Answer= Words Read Per Minute

Appendix H

NAME:_____

CHART ACTIVITY ONE

WEEK ONE:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK TWO:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK THREE:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK FOUR:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK FIVE:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK SIX:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK SEVEN:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

Appendix H (continued)

WEEK EIGHT:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK NINE:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

WEEK TEN:
MONDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
THURSDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____
FRIDAY: QUESTIONS CORRECT (6)____

Appendix I

NAME:

CHART ACTIVITY TWO

1. WEEK ONE/TAPE ONE	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
2. WEEK TWO/TAPE TWO	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
3. WEEK THREE/TAPE THREE	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
4. WEEK FOUR/TAPE FOUR	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
5. WEEK FIVE/TAPE FIVE	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUITE	_____
6. WEEK SIX/TAPE SIX	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
7. WEEK SEVEN/TAPE SEVEN	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
8. WEEK EIGHT/TAPE EIGHT	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
9. WEEK NINE/TAPE NINE	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____
10. WEEK TEN/TAPE TEN	QUESTIONS CORRECT (3)	_____
	WORDS PER MINUTE	_____

DID YOU BEAT THE CLOCK???????
WEEK ONE.....
WEEK TWO.....
WEEK THREE.....
WEEK FOUR.....
WEEK FIVE.....
WEEK SIX.....
WEEK SEVEN.....
WEEK EIGHT.....
WEEK NINE.....
WEEK TEN.....

1. BATS KEEP THEIR EARS CLEAN

Animals keep themselves clean in different ways. Dogs usually get clean by scratching themselves. This gets rid of the loose hairs. They don't take a water bath often – on their own anyway. Too much water makes a dog's skin dry out, and it may crack.

When children take baths, they sometimes forget to clean their ears. But bats don't forget. Their ears must always be clean because bats find their way by listening to sounds.

A bat puts the thumb of its winged front "hand" in its ear and twists it around and around to loosen the dirt. The rest of its body is kept spotless with its long, pink tongue.

A jackrabbit also remembers to clean its ears. It pushes them forward with a foot, so its tongue can reach them. It cleans its feet by shaking each one to loosen the dirt and then licking it.

Squirrels are mostly concerned with cleaning their tails. They spend hours grooming their tails, but for good reason. A squirrel's tail acts as a parachute when it jumps and as a "balancing pole" when it runs along branches. In winter, asleep in its nest, it wraps itself in a warm tail "blanket."

Just as people use combs to keep their hair smooth, so do many animals. After bathing, the duckbill platypus combs its fur with a long claw until it's smooth and in place.

Bears use claw "combs" too. They sharpen their claws on stumps and tree trunks. This keeps their "combs" sharp. Claws are also the bear's main weapons of defense.

All of Mother Nature's animals know that keeping clean is a must for survival.

1. This passage tells us mostly about how some animals
   - ☐ a. move by sound.
   - ☐ b. wash their food.
   - ☐ c. keep their bodies clean.
   - ☐ d. sharpen their claws.

2. According to this article, an important part of survival is
   - ☐ a. knowing your enemy.
   - ☐ b. keeping warm.
   - ☐ c. finding food.
   - ☐ d. keeping clean.

3. Bats find their way by
   - ☐ a. listening to sounds.
   - ☐ b. feeling things around them.
   - ☐ c. guesswork.
   - ☐ d. tasting the air.

4. We can see that
   - ☐ a. not all animals keep clean by using water.
   - ☐ b. animals don't clean themselves very often.
   - ☐ c. teeth are a bear's only weapon.
   - ☐ d. most animals wash their food regularly.

5. A squirrel uses its tail for
   - ☐ a. fighting.
   - ☐ b. warmth.
   - ☐ c. nesting material.
   - ☐ d. hiding.

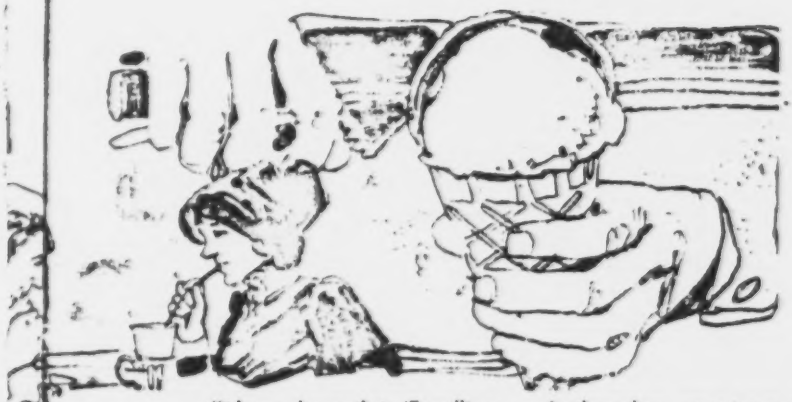
6. As used in this article spotless means
   - ☐ a. dry.
   - ☐ b. oiled.
   - ☐ c. wet.
   - ☐ d. clean.

CATEGORIES OF COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

No. 1: Subject Matter	No. 3: Supporting Details	No. 5: Clarifying Devices
No. 2: Main Idea	No. 4: Conclusion	No. 6: Vocabulary in Context

Appendix K

A Sample Copy of Fantastic Facts



Did you know that 47 million Americans scream for ice cream every day? Can you believe that Americans eat ice cream at the cool rate of 23 gallons per person each year? That's enough to fill the entire Grand Canyon!

How old is ice cream? It dates all the way back to Roman times. It's said that Emperor Nero (54-68 A.D.) sent runners to the mountains to bring back snow. Before the snow melted, Nero added fruit slices and honey to it. This was the first ice cream—a dish only kings could afford.

Hundreds of years later, milk and other ingredients were added to ice cream. Often the ingredients were kept a secret. And still, only kings and Presidents could afford to eat ice cream.

Records show that during the summer of 1790, George Washington ran up a $200 bill with a New York ice cream maker. And Dolly Madison, wife of the fourth President, served pink ice cream at a big White House dinner.

By the middle of the 1800's, new inventions made it easier to store ice and make ice cream. Before long, everybody could afford ice cream. And by 1873, people were even sipping ice cream sodas.

In those days, many towns would not allow drinks—including ice cream sodas—to be sold on Sunday. So in the 1890's, fountain owners came up with a new creation—ice cream and syrup, but no soda. They called their dish a "Sunday" and it became an instant hit. Years later, the "ay" ending was changed to "ae."

What about the ice cream cone? When was it invented? The first ice cream cone was eaten in 1904. In that year, the World's Fair was held in St. Louis. At one stand, a man named Ernest A. Hamwi was selling a sweet flat pastry baked on a waffle iron. Next to him, a man was selling ice cream. When his neighbor ran out of ice cream dishes, Ernest came to the rescue. He rolled his thin waffle pastry into a cone shape and let it cool. Then he scooped some ice cream into the cone. Like the ice cream soda and ice cream sundae, the ice cream cone made a big hit.

Next time you eat an ice cream cone, look at it carefully. You'll see that it still has a waffle pattern. And while you're thinking of your next ice cream cone, here's something else to think about. Today, you have 405 flavors to choose from. That's the latest scoop!

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